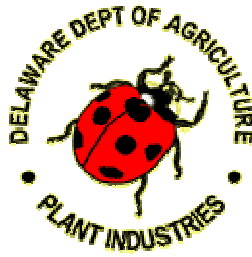


What should I do about the Africanized Bee?

Take Some Common Sense Precautions:

- Make a “bee patrol” around your home once or twice a week during swarming seasons. Listen for the sound of bees in the air. Persistent buzzing may mean a hive or swarm is nearby.
- “Bee-proof” your home by filling in potential nesting sites such as tree cavities and holes in outside walls. Put screens on the tops of rain spouts and over water meter boxes in the ground. Remove piles of trash and junk.
- If you discover a bee colony, don’t disturb it. Find out who removes or destroys wild colonies in your area and report it to them.
- If attacked by Africanized honey bees, your best defense is to run away as fast as you can. Seek shelter immediately in a building, car, or heavy brush.
- If you are stung many times, seek medical attention immediately.
- If you are allergic to bee stings, or think you might be, consult your physician immediately for the best precautions to take.



Delaware Department of Agriculture

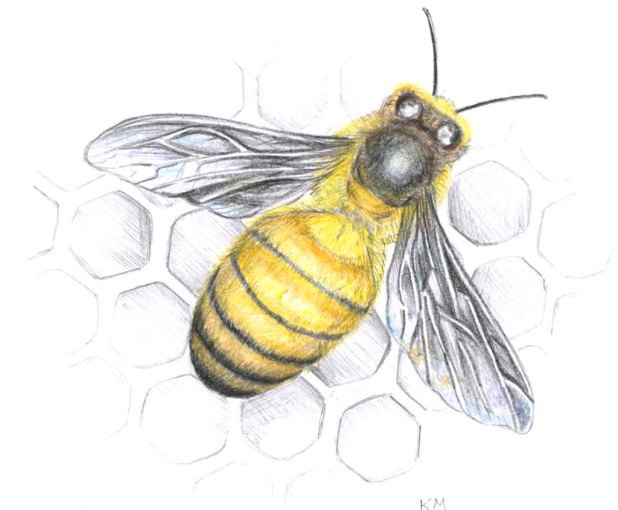
Plant Industries Section
2320 South DuPont Hwy.
Dover, DE 19901-5515
(302) 698-4500
www.state.de.us/deptagri

This material is based upon work supported by the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under special project number 91-EXCA-2-0130.

Educational programs conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, handicap or national origin.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Acts of Congress of May 8, 1914, as amended and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, Zerle L. Carpenter, Director, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System.

Delaware Department of Agriculture



Africanized Honey Bees

A New Public Nuisance

The Africanized Honey Bee, popularly known as the “killer bee,” is moving into South Texas and the southern United States. Scientists are not certain how far north the bee will spread, but they do know that it will cause problems wherever it resides in large numbers.

This insect, which has been migrating from South America since the 1950’s, looks just like a domestic bee, but it is not nearly as good natured. In fact, it has a bit of a quick temper.

The domestic bee has lived in harmony with human beings for hundreds of years. It has been bred for gentleness and good honey production.

By contrast, the Africanized honey bee is a “wild” bee that is not comfortable being around humans or animals. Any colony of bees will defend its hive, but Africanized bees do so with gusto. These bees are more likely to sense a threat at greater distances, become more upset with less

More People Will Get Stung

More People will be stung by bees whenever Africanized honey bees become established. Some individuals may get stung hundreds of times in only a few moments.

The Africanized bee’s “killer” reputation is greatly exaggerated, but it does in fact have some basis. In isolated instances, people and animals have been stung to death. Most often, the person who died was not able to get away from the bees quickly. Animal losses have occurred for the same reasons. Pets and livestock were tied up or penned when they encountered the bees. However, Africanized bees do not roam in giant swarms looking for victims to attack. Like most animals, these bees react defensively only when they feel threatened.

The Africanized bee is a new insect nuisance, but it will not change the way people live, work, and play. People in parts of Central and South America have lived with this bee for

several
decades
without
much

A Threat to Beekeepers

Beyond public safety, the Africanized honey bee will have the greatest impact on beekeepers. Commercial beekeepers could go out of business if Africanized bees drive out or breed into their domestic colonies.

Because honey bees provide 80 percent of the pollination required by agricultural crops, a reduction in the number of beekeepers could lead to reduced yields in melons and other commodities as well as a decline in honey production.

Beekeepers are working closely with state and federal agencies to minimize the impacts of the Africanized honey bee.

Know the Bee’s Behavior

Your best protection against the Africanized bee is to understand how it behaves and react accordingly. Bees “swarm” to establish new hives in the spring and fall. Bees are most active then. You may find bees setting up housekeeping where you live literally overnight.

Individual bees gathering pollen on flowers or masses of bees clinging together in swarms generally will not bother you. However, bees are more likely to be defensive after they have established a colony and started raising

